

Michael K. Powell  
Chairman, Federal Communications Commission

Dear Chairman Powell:

A proposal was formally presented two days ago to relax regulations on media ownership, regulations that heretofore have prevented one media giant from controlling a large markets in radio, television or print media. We believe elimination of these regulations is against everything that a free society holds dear: allowance for, and dissemination of, various competing points of view, local participation in local media markets, and free and open discussion of various political issues without de facto censorship. The control of media markets by one corporation could silence that discussion, or tilt it powerfully toward the views of that corporation, all the while presenting the facade of variety and objectivity to an unsuspecting public. Thus could the democratic process get fatally skewed--a process whose lifeline is a free and unfettered press. Such local and even state-wide monopolies would create a totalitarian's dream: a limited and skewed version of the "truth," but with the public oblivious to the very existence of those limitations.

This elimination of long-standing ownership regulations appears about to take place without the most basic public awareness or discussion of its significance--in part because those media giants that could alert the public are complicit in its dissolution! Therefore, the Federal Communication Commission MUST allow more time to publicize these proposals, discuss their possible significances, and allow the public to examine what are seen by many as their disastrously damaging effects.

Please let us know if we may send our objections to these proposed changes to any other responsible parties. We are convinced these proposals are as alarming and dangerous as any curtailment of basic civil rights or liberties could every be.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Mr. and Mrs.) Curt Barnes  
New York City